

REGIONAL MEETING ON MARINE PARKS AND RESERVES IN THE NORTHERN INDIAN OCEAN, INCLUDING THE RED SEA AND THE PERSIAN GULF, HELD IN TEHRAN, IRAN, 6–10 MARCH 1975

The conservation of renewable (living) resources of coastal marine areas, including the establishment of a regional system of marine parks and other protected areas, was the objective of this first regional marine working meeting, which was convened by IUCN and the Department of the Environment of the Imperial Government of Iran, in close cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNESCO, and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries: Iran, Bahrain, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Kuwait, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Sudan. The Governments of the following States were also invited but did not send representatives: India, Iraq, Mauritius, Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, Yemen (Arab Republic), and Yemen (People's Democratic Republic). In addition, there were representatives from UNEP and UNESCO as well as from IUCN/WWF, including IUCN/WWF marine consultants.

National, Regional, and Technical, reports were submitted and considered in detail by the Meeting. In planning for the development of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the Persian Gulf, and the north-west Indian Ocean, so that the full scientific, educational, recreational, and economic, benefits for the region may be achieved, the Meeting particularly emphasized the need to take into account the nature of coastal marine ecosystems. The facts that coastal zones provide the richest known concentration of marine species and biotic communities, and that coastal breeding-grounds are essential for the maintenance of sustained-yield fisheries, were also stressed. Concern was expressed, however, over the increasing deterioration which these areas are facing because of disturbance from human activities, such as pollution, coastal development for industry, recreation, waste disposal, dredging, and tourism—to mention only some of the more serious threats to the coastal zone. Understanding of downstream effects was considered vital in coastal marine management, since watershed alteration (through overgrazing, damming, and deforestation) may alter coastal systems by changing water quality, nutrient exchange, and siltation.

The results of the ensuing discussions on how to guide future coastal development and how to prevent the deterioration of coastal areas, were considered by the General Principles Working Group which submitted to the Meeting a number of Agreed Principles and General Recommendations, which subsequently were adopted.

The need for conserving representative parts of marine ecosystems through the establishment of national and regional marine parks and reserves as an integrated part of regional land and coastal marine planning, was stressed, as was the need for implementing research and monitoring programmes of the level and effects of pollution (using marine protected areas as controls).

The Meeting recommended that establishment of marine parks should be implemented in various stages covering (a) site selection, (b) site (resource) inventory, (c) site planning, (d) site design, and (e) site use. It also recommended that the Governments of the region should consider and manage carefully those marine areas which are suitable for research, monitoring, tourism, recreation, and education of the public, as well as further the education and training of personnel for the management of marine protected areas. The importance of understanding processes, rather than just components of marine ecosystems, was emphasized.

Action plans and recommendations on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the Persian Gulf, and the north-west

Indian Ocean, were submitted by the three regional Working Groups covering these areas, and were adopted by the Meeting. The Working Groups strongly recommended the initiation of detailed national and international oceanographic, biological, and ecological, surveys of the region for the purpose of determining sites for marine protected areas. Training of management personnel was considered an important part of the proposed marine conservation programme. Existing, proposed, and potential, marine parks and reserves in the region were identified by the Working Groups. Some seventy sites were listed, each with a short description of outstanding features.

The gist of the recommendations of the Regional and Parks Planning Working Groups was that planning of marine parks and reserves is a continuing process that is related to the changing conditions in the environment which alter through human use and the impact of technological development. Altogether it is to be hoped that the Agreed Principles and General Recommendations of this first marine Regional Meeting* will prove useful in future efforts to improve the methods of planning, developing, and managing, marine resources on regional and other levels.

MONA I. BJÖRKLUND, *Executive Officer
Commission on Ecology
IUCN Secretariat
1110 Morges, Switzerland.*

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'MEDITERRANEAN ECOLOGY—A COOPERATIVE INTERNATIONAL CONCERN', BEING THE 45TH QUAKER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, HELD AT ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL, CLARENS, VAUD, SWITZERLAND, 11–19 JULY 1975

Meeting for this occasion near Montreux, Switzerland, nationals of thirteen Mediterranean countries, together with participants from Western Europe, Japan, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A., discussed in depth problems of pollution in the Mediterranean as presented by authoritative speakers. The Conference, after discussing dangers to the entire ecological system of the Mediterranean that stem from the various sources of pollution, and in consideration of the grave threats to the health, welfare, development, and peace, of the region, that derive from ecological damage, agreed:

1. That there is urgent need for an integrated programme of international pollution control in the Mediterranean, including ship-board, harbour, coastal, and river-borne, sources:

An important preliminary to the initiation of the necessary agreements to implement such a programme should be the evaluation of the success achieved in implementing previous relevant international agreements. This should serve as a guide to the Secretariat of UNEP (The United Nations Environment Programme) in drafting future agreements and as a reminder to Governments of the need for enforcement measures;

Particular attention should be given to an early standardization and completion of oil reception facilities, ratification and implementation of existing conventions, mandatory use of correctly documented log-books, specific studies on Mediterranean pollution of terrestrial origin, and early protocols to cover such pollution;

The conference of plenipotentiaries that is being organized by UNEP in Barcelona in February 1976* should be urged to view the problems of the environment in the Mediterranean basin in a comprehensive way, towards

* See our last issue, pp. 235–6.—Ed.

ensuring control of the different sources of pollution in all parts of the region for the benefit of all peoples in the area;

2. That there is a fundamental need to consider development and environment as inextricably linked, both at the regional and national levels. It was also stressed, while recognizing differences of priorities at the national level, that there should be a unifying link between national and regional plans. It was pointed out that the various U.N. Secretariats could play an important role in unifying the different multi-lateral and sectoral agreements;

3. To bring to the attention of the international organizations concerned, the dire need for effective decision-making machinery for the protection of the Mediterranean from pollution. This should include arrangements for taking account of the possible interests of future generations and the likely impact of proposed decisions. International organizations and governments should consider whether this might be best achieved by the designation of a responsible office to speak on behalf of otherwise unrepresented groups (such as young people and even the unborn). It is suggested that such an office might:

- (a) be empowered to receive evidence and suggestions from individuals and associations of any kind,
- (b) be charged to prepare and submit relevant documentation and other forms of evidence, and
- (c) be required to present and argue in each instance the case in defence of the interests of the unrepresented groups;

4. To remind governments and international organizations that, whereas it is essential for the collective will to be expressed through conventions, protocols, and other binding instruments, the ratification of these is only a first step in the process of bringing pollution activities under control. Thereafter continuing appraisal must be made of the implementation of these instruments and of their effectiveness. This applies not only to what may emerge from the Barcelona meetings, but also to existing conventions such as those for which the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) is already responsible. The purpose of such appraisal is to ensure that the instruments are fully enforced—not only according to the letter of the agreements but also according to their spirit and intent, so that further action can be taken to amend any deficiencies in them;

5. That the Governments of the Mediterranean States be asked to make available, through international journals or other international media, all data in their possession on pollutant levels in the Mediterranean Sea and the natural resources which it contains, so that decisions affecting the health and well-being of the public may be made in the light of the best available information and with the understanding of the public;

6. That UNEP, under its public awareness programme, be asked to facilitate the provision of information, materials, and techniques, designed to promote an understanding of the problems of the Mediterranean among those members of the public for whom such information is not normally accessible, such as trade unionists and housewives;

7. That an information referral centre be established, preferably by an international organization that is already active in the Mediterranean, in order to extend the exchange of information among individuals and organizations: this should be in addition to existing and planned arrangements for exchange and storing of scientific data;

8. That relevant intergovernmental organizations, both within and outside the U.N. system, be invited to assist in the improvement, in each country, of communication between the scientific community and bodies and persons responsible for national policies and decisions;

9. That each government be invited to arrange either to establish a single and fully competent national agency that would be responsible for implementation of conventions pertaining to the pollution of the sea, or to provide means and authority for coordination of the several separate departments of government that may be so concerned;

10. That governments enforce the provisions of the International Conventions of 1954–62 and 1973 in regard to the maintenance of accurate details in ships' oil record books and registers or noxious cargoes, thus contributing to the reduction of ship-board pollution;

11. That there is a fundamental requirement for international cooperation in the Mediterranean region, so as to ensure the protection of the environment in a comprehensive manner as well as leading to a reduction of conflict, and as a necessary step to the establishment of lasting peace in the region;

12. To request that the official non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned should be granted observer status at the 1976 Barcelona conference of plenipotentiaries.

Having prepared the above recommendations for national and international action, the participants agreed that decisions for the control of pollution can only be appropriate if those who will be affected subsequently support them. This calls for very considerable educational and personal efforts. To this end participants resolved each to take, or try to initiate, the following actions:

1. To work to make consistent his or her personal life with his or her professional and other social activities regarding the environment, and in such a way as to limit or at least reduce any possible contribution to marine pollution;
2. To undertake more full and free exchange of information and mutual assistance among concerned persons, within families, and between professions, while disseminating pertinent information and explanations as widely as possible;
3. To encourage scientifically and technically well-informed people to work with the general public in the interest of the natural and human environment of the Mediterranean as a whole, so that constructive dialogue about ways of overcoming poverty and pollution can be pursued with those in influential positions (such as industrialists, managers, public servants, parliamentarians, trade union officials, education authorities, teachers, and executives of political parties);
4. To employ concerned associations and communication media, such as the Friends of the Mediterranean Sea (FoMS) and its *Newsletter*†, as well as others, to the above ends.

Participants from a number of countries (Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey) committed themselves to arrange an international essay competition for young residents (between 16 and 18 years of age) of the Mediterranean countries. The winners will have the opportunity to spend a month in another country in 1976, working in a marine park, a nature reserve, or some other appropriate environment, or on a research vessel. The International Ocean Institute, Msida, Malta, will pay their travel expenses, and each host country will provide food and lodging for the guest.

SYLVAIN S. MINAULT, *Director*
Quaker International Conferences
13 Avenue du Mervelet
1209 Geneva, Switzerland.

† See Professor Sidney J. Holt's account in *Environmental Conservation*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 152–3, Summer 1975.—Ed.